

Assure Readiness, Sustainability of Deployed Forces

The second objective is to assure the readiness and sustainability of deployed forces.

"The price of inadequate readiness is paid in unnecessary risks to American interests and in unnecessary risks to the lives of American servicemen and -women," he said.

"Our armed forces today are all volunteers," he continued. "They are men and women who have willingly answered the call to serve our country and accept the burdens and dangers that go with that service. As President Bush has said, even the highest morale is eventually undermined by back-to-back deployments, poor pay, shortages of spare parts and equipment, and declining readiness."

He said a volunteer military has only two paths to follow to fill its ranks: One is to lower standards, while the other is to "inspire the best and brightest to join and stay," he said. "... I look forward to working with the president and this committee that has been so interested in the subject, to make sure that our country's [Services are] able to attract and retain the best of our country."

Modernize C3I and Space Capabilities

The third objective is to modernize U.S. command, control, communications, intelligence, and space capabilities. "A modern command, control, communications, and intelligence infrastructure is the foundation upon which U.S. military power is employed," Rumsfeld said.

He said he is committed to strengthening U.S. intelligence for both short-term and long-term national security needs. "I will personally make establishing a strong spirit of cooperation between the Department of Defense and the rest of the intelligence community, under the leadership of a director of central intelligence, one of my top priorities," he said. "We simply must strengthen our intelligence capabilities and our space capabilities, along with the ability to protect those assets against various forms of attack."

Speed Up Research, Development, and Acquisition

The fourth objective looks to speeding research, development, and acquisition. "The need to swiftly introduce new weapons systems is clear," Rumsfeld said. "The transformation of U.S. military power to take full advantage of commercially created information technology may require undertaking near-term investment to acquire modern capabilities derived from U.S. scientific and industrial pre-eminence, rather than simply upgrading some existing systems."

He said the present weapon system acquisition process is not well suited to meet the demands posed by an expansion of unconventional and asymmetrical threats. The current cycle time from program start to initial operational capability is generally over eight years.

"Such processes are not capable of harnessing the remarkable genius and productivity of the modern information-based commercial and industrial sectors that have done so much to revolutionize our civilian economy," he said.

Reform DoD Structures, Processes, Organization

The fifth objective is the reform of DoD structures, processes, and organization. "The legacy of obsolete institutional structures and processes and organizations does not merely create unnecessary cost, which of course it does; it also imposes an unacceptable burden on national defense," he said. "In certain respects, it could be said that we are in a sense disarming or 'underarming' by our failure to reform the acquisition process and to shed unneeded organization and facilities. If confirmed, we will examine, in consultation with the Congress, omnibus approaches to changing the statutory and regulatory basis for the most significant obstacles to reform."

Editor's Note: Rumsfeld was confirmed by the Senate and sworn in as the 21st Secretary of Defense Jan. 20, 2001.

Signing and Retention Bonuses Available for High-Technology Workers!

A proposed change to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), published Dec. 28, 2000, is designed to aid government contractors in hiring and retaining the talent they need in certain technical areas. The proposed change makes it clear that the government will reimburse contractors for signing and retention bonuses needed to recruit and retain workers with critical technical skills.

Increasingly, the government is contracting for services, particularly those of scientists and engineers in fields such as software and systems integration. This trend is driven by the need to use technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government performance. Deidre A. Lee, the Director of Defense Procurement, stated that "Contractors have told me of their difficulties in competing with predominantly non-government firms to attract and retain personnel with critical technical skills. While signing bonuses for difficult-to-fill positions and retention allowances for essential employees are already allowable costs on government contracts, this rule will make that allowability explicit in the FAR."

A copy of the proposed change can be found at [http://www.arinet.gov/far/ProposedRules \(FAR case 2000-014\)](http://www.arinet.gov/far/ProposedRules(FAR%20case%2000-014)). Comments are due Feb. 26, 2001.